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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 221875

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TAGS: PGOV, PREL, IE

SUBJECT: THE SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH IRISH FOREIGN

MINISTER AHERN, DECEMBER 1, 2005, 3:00 PM, THE SECRETARY'S  
OFFICE

(U) Classified by S Chief of Staff Steve Beecroft, for  
reasons 1.4 (b), and (d)

1. (U) Participants:

U.S.

The Secretary

EUR Kurt Volker, Acting A/S

S Chief of Staff Steve Beecroft

PA Sean McCormick

EUR/UBI Notetaker Mike O'Malley

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RELEASED IN PART  
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

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Ireland

FM Dermot Ahern

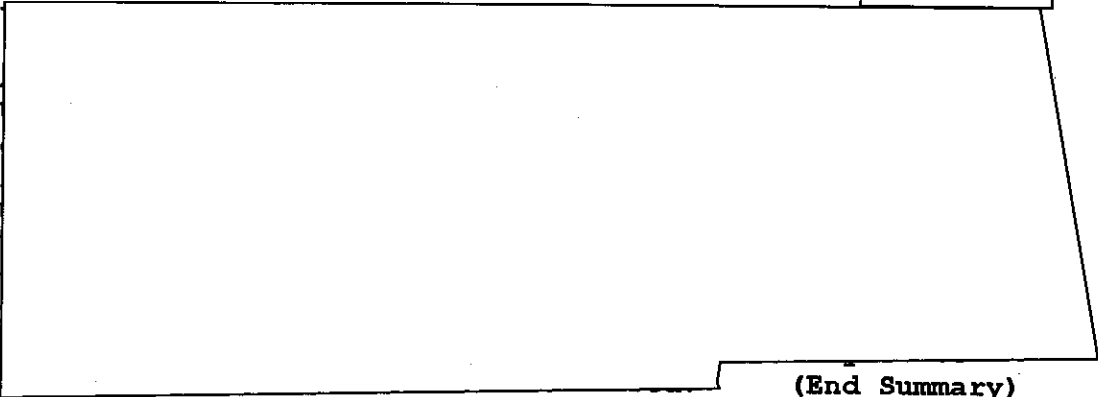
Irish Ambassador Noel Fahey  
DFA Secretary General Dermot Gallagher  
DFA Political Director Rory Montgomery

Ciaran O'Cuinn

Richard Moore

Embassy Notetaker Alison Kelly

2. (C) SUMMARY. (U) Irish FM Dermot Ahern met with Secretary Rice on December 1, 2005 for the first time. The two had a full and wide-ranging discussion, 



(End Summary)

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Irish "Illegals"

4. (U) Turning to immigration, FM Ahern said that he just wanted to mention concern in Ireland about an estimated 25,000 undocumented Irish citizens in the U.S.

Acknowledging that this represented an insignificant portion of the overall immigration problem for the U.S. he observed that this is a political issue in Ireland, as many have a family member in the U.S. whose ability to travel home for funerals, weddings, etc. is curtailed by their undocumented status. He also noted Irish support for the provisions of the Kennedy-McCain immigration legislation that would provide some relief of this situation. The Secretary said that immigration was an enormously difficult issue and that the President was working hard to balance the competing views to craft a reasonable and fair immigration policy.

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## Last Topics

11. (U) As the meeting prepared to break up, the Secretary brought up one last topic. We need, she said, not to lose sight of the "forgotten success" in Afghanistan. Afghanistan's economy is currently dependent on aid and poppy. We need to work with them to help to build a

sustainable economy.

12. (U) The FM also used the opportunity to bring up the importance of U.S. engagement in helping to move forward the reform agenda at the UN, a process in which he is very much involved. The Secretary agreed on the importance of the reform agenda and noted that those, such as the Jamaicans and the G77, seeking to block reform need to be more realistic. She also noted that, without reform, moving U.S. contributions through Congress was going to become increasingly difficult.

RICE

RICE

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